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# HOW IT IS DONE.

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AN ORIGINAL  
DOMESTIC DRAMA  
IN FOUR ACTS.

—BY—

WILLIAM OKIE McCARTY.

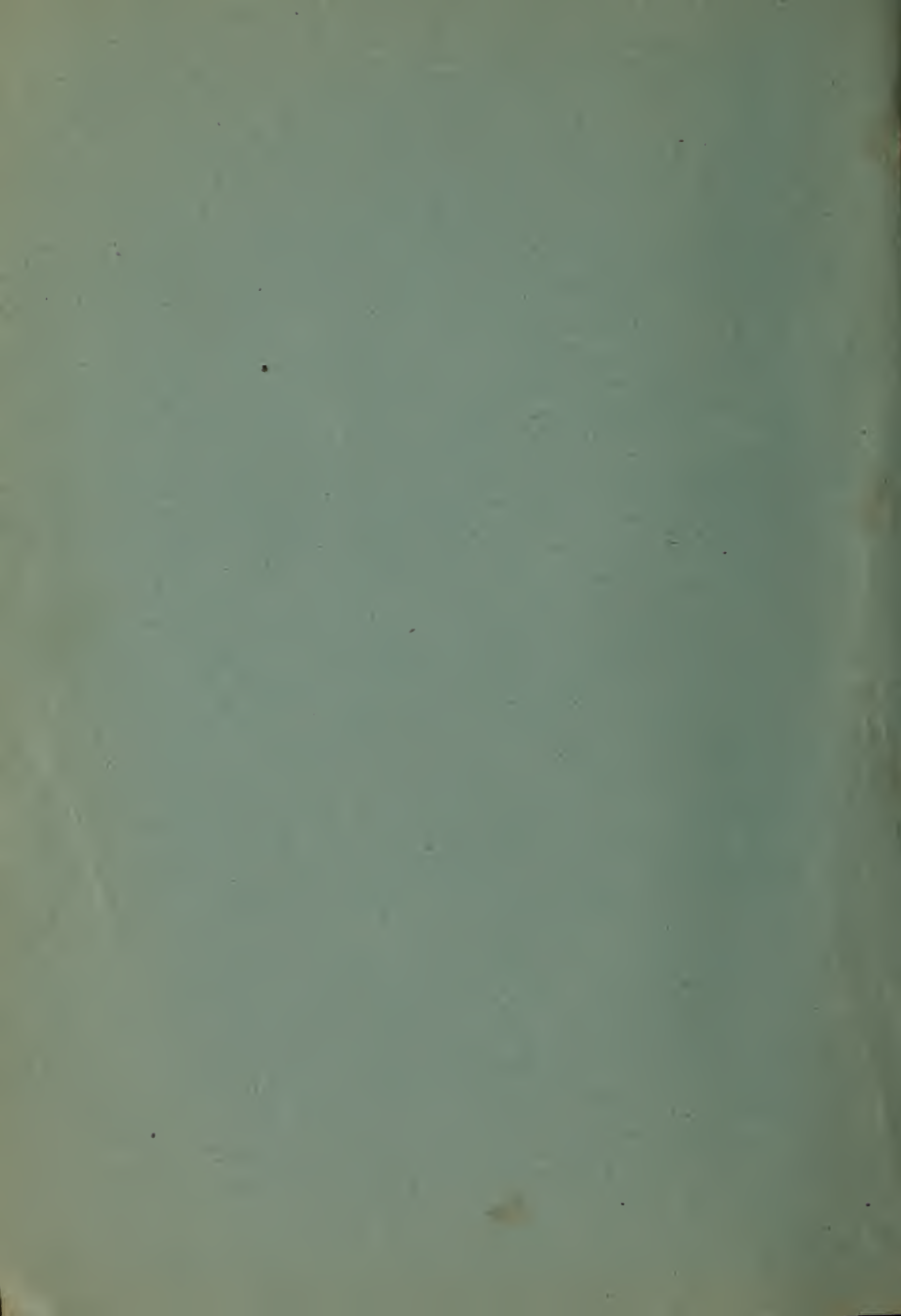
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PHILADELPHIA :  
HORTING & SNADER,

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Bibbins . . . . .	Real Estate Agent.
Tibbs . . . . .	Clerk.
Smulls . . . . .	Constable.
Millard . . . . .	Auctioneer.
Fagg . . . . .	Millard's Assistant.
Tom Grimes . . . . .	} Servants.
Tim Murray . . . . .	
Brown . . . . .	Tin Roofer.
Mrs. Price . . . . .	Tenant.
Susan . . . . .	} Children of Mrs. Price.
Flora . . . . .	
Richard . . . . .	
Mrs. De Huff . . . . .	} Tenants.
Mrs. Falbus . . . . .	
Mrs. Jones . . . . .	
Mrs. Pippson . . . . .	
Mrs. Bell . . . . .	} Philanthropist.
Quinby . . . . .	
Finn . . . . .	Detective.
Shaw . . . . .	Assistant Detective.
Bennett . . . . .	Police Officer.
Men and Women desiring to rent houses.	
Tenants, guests and others.	

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## COSTUMES OF THE DAY.

### ACT I

- Scene 1—A room in Mrs. Price's house.
- Scene 2—Mr. Bibbins' office.
- Scene 3—Kitchen in Mrs. Bell's house.
- Scene 4—Sitting-room in Mrs. Price's house.

### ACT II

- Scene 1—Bibbins' Office.
- Scene 2—Library in Bibbins' residence.
- Scene 3—Sitting-room in Mrs. Price's house.

### ACT III

- Scene 1—A Street.
- Scene 2—A side view of Skipp's Court after the sale.
- Scene 3—Street in front of Detective Finn's residence.
- Scene 4—Sitting-room in Detective Finn's house.

### ACT IV

- Scene 1—Bibbins' Office.
- Scene 2—Front view of Bibbins' grand residence.

### EXITS AND ENTRANCES

L. D. means left door; R. D., right door; U. E., upper entrance; L. E., left entrance; R. E., right entrance.

### RELATIVE POSITIONS

C. means centre; L., left; R., right; L. S., left side; R. S., right side.

# HOW IT IS DONE

## ACT I.

Time—Winter. Place—Philadelphia.

SCENE I.—*A room in Mrs. Price's house. The widow seated sewing at the bedside of her sick child, Susan, aged nine years. Her other children, Flora and Richard, aged respectively seven and five years, are also present.*

*Widow Price.* Oh, what shall I do! I hope and pray that Mr. Bibbins, the agent, will wait a little while longer for the rent. He has sent his clerk, John Tibbs, here twice already to collect it, but I could not pay it on account of the extra expense I have been put to through the sickness of my darling.

*[Looking fondly at her sleeping child Susan.]*

The rent has been due only three days, and in advance at that; yet I fear if it is not paid soon my household goods will be sold, myself and little ones turned out into the streets, homeless—and my child sick, too. Oh, even the thoughts of it almost drives me mad!

*[She weeps.]*

*Flora.* *[Hugs her mother.]* Don't cry, dear mother! God will help us—so you have told me many times—don't you remember?

*Widow Price.* *[Embracing Flora.]* Yes, my darling, I do remember telling you so, and I still believe He will help us in some way.

*[Rises, arranges the bed clothing; then sits down.]*

I feel sure that I could manage to pay this month's rent, in full, on the day that it will be actually due, by selling part of my furniture, and with what I could earn by sewing in the meantime; but I fear the agent

will not be willing to wait until then. My dear husband died almost two years ago. Oh, were he now living he would protect us from the impending calamity! A month later we moved into this house, and I have always managed until now to pay the rent promptly in advance. To do so I have toiled early and late. Many sleepless nights have I passed, through the almost constant fear of being unable to pay the rent, and now to think of what may take place. Homeless, and in mid-winter, too! That would be terrible! I was forced to sign away the law's protection, so I am helpless. [She weeps.]

*Susan.* [Awakening from her sleep.] Poor Mother, what is the matter? Don't cry. It makes me sad to see you so worried.

*Widow Price.* [Caressing Susan.] There is nothing the matter, my dear. I am worried because you are not well. Do you feel better, my pet?

*Susan.* Yes, I feel better to-day than I did yesterday. I will soon be well again, won't I, dear mother?

*Widow Price.* [Looking fondly at her.] Yes, my darling—I hope so.

*Susan.* It must make you, dear mother, feel very sad, when you think how hard you have to work to keep a home for yourself and us children. I frequently awake late in the night, and when I do I always see you sitting at my bedside sewing, and it makes me sad.

*Widow Price.* [Caressing Susan.] You must not think of such things. If you do, it will prevent you from getting well. And that would make me very sad, indeed.

*Susan.* Mother, I will try to be very happy, and then I will soon get well again, won't I?

*Widow Price.* Yes, dear. [Rises.] You [to Flora] take care of the house. I am going out [puts on a shawl], but will soon return. Remain near your sister.

*Flora.* I will, dear mother.



*Widow Price.* [*Aside.*] I am now going to see Mr. Bibbins, and beg him to wait a while longer for the rent. May God soften his hard heart. He had Mr. Winter's household goods sold the other day for non-payment of advance rent. No wonder he is so hated. [*Knocking is heard at the door.*]

Oh, gracious! I hope it is not the Constable—yet I fear it is. [*Widow Price opens the door.*]

*Enter JOHN TIBBS, U. E.*

*Tibbs.* Good morning, Mrs. Price.

*Widow Price.* Good morning, sir; I suppose you came to collect the rent?

*Tibbs.* Yes, Madam.

*Widow Price.* Well, I cannot pay it now; but you will please to tell Mr. Bibbins that I will call at his office within an hour to see him.

*Tibbs.* Very well, madam; I will report to Mr. Bibbins what you have said. How is your little girl to-day?

*Widow Price.* She is better to-day, I thank you.

*Tibbs.* I am glad to hear that she is, and hope that she will soon get well. Good day.

*Widow Price.* Good morning, sir.

[*Exit Tibbs, U. E.*]

[*Aside.*] I will now go to see Mr. Bibbins. You, [*To Flora and Richard*] children, must not let anybody in the house during my absence. [*Goes to the door.*]

*Flora and Richard.* We will not let anybody in the house while you are away. Good by, mother. Come back soon.

*Widow Price.* I will. Good by, my darlings. [*Embracing them.*]

[*Exit, Widow Price, U. E.*]

SCENE II.—*Office; MR. THOMAS BIBBINS seated at his writing-desk (R. S.) reading a newspaper.*

*Bibbins.* [*Looks up from paper.*] I wonder what

can be keeping Tibbs so long. He should have been here an hour ago. [Reads.]

*Enter Tibbs, L. D.*

*Tibbs.* Good morning, sir. It is very cold to-day.

*Bibbins.* [*Lays paper on his desk.*] What kept you so long? I have been expecting you the last hour.

*Tibbs.* Well, Sir, when I called at Mr. Williams' house he was not at home. I waited until he came—over half an hour.

*Bibbins.* Well, did he pay his rent?

*Tibbs.* Yes, Sir; here it is.

[*Hands the money to Bibbins, who after seeing it is correct, puts it in his pocket.*]

*Bibbins.* It is a good thing for him that he did. Did you collect Mrs. Price's rent?

*Tibbs.* No, sir, I did not. She promised to call here at the office almost immediately to see you regarding the rent.

*Enter MRS. PRICE, L. D.*

*Widow Price.* Good morning, Mr. Bibbins. It is terribly cold to-day.

*Bibbins.* Good morning, madam. Who are you?

*Widow Price.* Why, don't you know me? I am Mrs. Price. [*Takes a seat near desk.*]

*Bibbins.* [*Hesitatingly.*] Well, yes, I think I do. But I did not at first. There are so many persons coming and going during office hours that it makes it hard for me to remember faces of persons whom I do not frequently see. Now, you have not been here before for many months.

*Widow Price.* No, sir; it has been almost a year since I was here before.

*Bibbins.* Well, madam, what can I do for you?

*Widow Price.* I came here, sir, to see if you would be kind enough to wait a week longer for the rent. By that time I feel sure that I could pay it. I hope you will, sir.



*Bibbins.* I am sorry, madam, that I cannot accommodate you. The owner of the property has already been here for his rent, and left orders to have it collected at once.

*Widow Price.* But, sir, my rent is not actually due.

*Bibbins.* What do you mean, madam? Tibbs, does not this lady's lease call for advance rent. If so, when was it due? [*Tibbs rises and hunts the lease.*]

*Widow Price.* Yes, sir, it does. I was forced to sign it. I do not get my money until the goods have been made up—sometimes not even then. It is unjust to compel anyone to pay rent in advance—very unjust.

*Tibbs.* [*Holding up the lease.*] Yes, sir, it does—one month's rent was due three days ago.

[*Tibbs takes seat at desk.*]

*Bibbins.* Now, you see, Mrs. Price, I have already waited three days over the time. Not many agents who would be willing to wait that long, you know.

*Widow Price.* But you have already sent Mr. Tibbs, your clerk here, [*pointing to Tibbs*] three times to my house to collect it; the last time was this morning.

*Bibbins.* That is just it, madam. Now, as a rule, I only send once for the rent—on the day that it is due; if not paid on that day or the day following, I give the matter into the hands of Mr. Smulls to collect. You, of course, have heard of him.

*Widow Price.* Yes, sir, I have. He is a constable. But you will certainly have pity upon me when you have heard of the distressed state that I am now in. Oh, sir, I will tell you!

*Bibbins.* No, no, madam, I do not wish to hear about your troubles—I am simply agent for the property.

*Enter A LADY, L. D.*

*Lady.* I wish to rent a small house; have you any small houses to rent?

*Bibbins.* Yes, madam; we have a nice five-roomed house on Bidd street, in good order, with all modern conveniences. Rent, fifteen dollars per month.

*Lady.* Well, sir, I would like to look through the house. Should it suit me, I will rent it. I like the locality.

*Bibbins.* Certainly, madam. [*To Tibbs, who rises.*] Look among those keys hanging up there [*pointing to end of the room*] and get the one that belongs to that house on Bidd street. Then go with this lady and show her through the house.

*Tibbs.* All right, sir. [*Looking over the keys, finds the proper one.*] Come, madam.

[*Exeunt Lady and Tibbs, L. D.*]

*Widow Price.* I have been too ill, sir, for more than a month to do much work. I sew for a livelihood. Besides, I have a sick child on my hands at present, and have had for some time. Under these circumstances, sir, you certainly will have mercy upon myself and little ones. If you do not, we will be homeless, in the cold streets.

*Bibbins.* There is no use in making so much fuss. You have said that you would be satisfied with a week's time to raise the rent in. You will have five days from date of levy to do so, you know.

*Widow Price.* Oh, you inhuman wretch! You would add to the amount already due, would you? [*Rises.*] How could I pay it? [*Exit Mrs. Price, L. D.*]

*Bibbins.* [*Rises, goes to c. of stage.*] Confound the woman! I have never been so insulted before in all my life. If she does not pay her rent in full by to-morrow noon, I shall the same day have her household goods levied upon by Mr. Smulls. I do not wish to hear about the distress of the poor. They have no business to be poor. [*Takes a seat L. of desk.*]

*Enter TIBBS, L. D.*

*Tibbs.* [*Puts the key in its place.*] The lady did not want the house. She said the rent is too high for so small a house. [*Takes a seat (R.) of desk.*]

*Bibbins.* What the devil does she expect to get for fifteen dollars a month?—a mansion, possibly.

*Enter SMULLS, L. D., rubbing his hands together.*

*Smulls.* [*Takes a seat L. S. of desk*] Good morning, Mr. Bibbins. It is a very cold day, sir.

*Bibbins.* Yes, pretty cold. Did you carry out my orders which I gave you a few days ago?

*Smulls.* Yes, sir, I did. I have levied upon the household goods of seven of your tenants who have not paid up. One of them, Mr. Banks, the carpenter, is still bed-ridden.

*Bibbins.* What the devil have I to do with that? I hope you are not getting soft-hearted. Are you? Ah! ah! ah!

*Smulls.* Oh, no; ah! ah! ah! I simply mentioned the fact,—no further thought.

*Bibbins.* You did right in obeying my orders. Landlords, real estate agents and constables must not have hearts, you know—ah! ah! ah!

*Smulls.* Right you are, sir. Mrs. Banks begged me, with tears in her eyes, to wait a few days longer before making the levy. She said that she would try to raise the money by that time and pay up by selling a part of her furniture and by borrowing some money from her friends.

*Bibbins.* Had you consented to do so, you would have acted without authority.

*Smulls.* That is very true, sir.

*Bibbins.* You know as well as I do that it is absolutely necessary for men in my line of business who desire to get rich—and the most of them do—to suppress the natural promptings of their hearts to aid those who are unfortunate, when such feelings in any

way interfere with their worldly gain. The same applies to worldlings in every walk of life, who do likewise without compunction. And their number is great, indeed.

*Smulls.* You are right, sir.

*Bibbins.* Now, as a rule, owners of dwelling houses do not want to know when any of their tenants are in distress; but they do want their tenants to pay promptly. Consequently they employ agents, and agents employ constables whenever necessary. Should we become tender-hearted, property owners would have no further use for us. Don't you see? What a fix we would then be in—ah! ah! ah!

*Enter GENTLEMAN, L. D.*

*Gent.* Have you [*to Bibbins*] any small or medium sized houses on hand to rent?

*Bibbins.* We have a small house on Bidd street; rent, fifteen dollars per month.

*Gent.* The location would not suit me. Any others, sir?

*Bibbins.* Yes, sir; we have a seven-roomed house to rent on Summer street, with all modern conveniences. Rent, twenty dollars per month. How would that suit you?

*Gent.* I will decide after having consulted with my wife about the matter. I will likely call again to-morrow.

*Bibbins.* Very well, sir; suit yourself about it.

*Gent.* Good day, sir. [*Exit Gentleman, L. D.*

*Smulls.* [*To Bibbins.*] Have you any more business on hand for me, sir? If not, I will go at once. I have been a little too extravagant recently, and the money spent must be made up—ah! ah! ah! I thought it likely that some of your tenants might be in arrears with their rent a few days or so, and that you would like to hurry them up a little by sending me to call upon them. So I came to see about the



matter. It comes in very convenient to me when I am short of funds. One needs a great deal of coal to keep warm a winter like this, you know—ah ! ah ! ah !

*Bibbins.* [*To Tibbs.*] Go to Bell Row and try to collect the rents that are due to-day. Should the tenants hesitate to pay up, tell them that I shall be obliged to send Mr. Smulls to see them. They well know what his calling to see them means.

*Smulls.* Oh, sir, you should not warn them ; you will ruin my business—ah ! ah ! ah !

*Bibbins.* [*To Tibbs.*] They know when their rents are due. Consequently, they should be prepared to pay. So, go at once.

*Tibbs.* [*Rises.*] Very well, sir.

[*Exit Tibbs, L. D.*]

*Bibbins.* [*Rises, gets his account books ; then takes a seat at desk, R. S.*]—I will now see what I can do for you, Smulls. [*Looks over the books.*] Put down the names as I read them off.

*Smulls.* [*Brings from his pocket a book and opens it.*] Very well, sir. I am now ready ; go on.

*Bibbins.* Widow Bell ; John Black ; John Muney ; Henry Jones ; Widow Clark, and Mr. Pippson. All of these are tenants of Skipps' Court,—you know them all, don't you?

[*Bibbins closes the book.*]

*Smulls.* Yes, sir ; I do. Is that all?

*Bibbins.* [*Hesitating.*] No, no ; one more—Mrs. Price. I had forgotten her. [*Aside.*] What a wonder, too. She is a very unreasonable woman.

*Smulls.* [*Aside, pretending to be looking over his memorandum book.*] Widow Bell has a good cook stove, just the kind of a one I need. Should I find her willing to give it to me I will keep out of the way and let her remove the rest of her goods from the house late at night. Old Bibbins will have to pay the costs of levy, anyway. [*Rises, and stands near desk.*] I will go at once to see her and try to get the stove.

*Bibbins.* Well, Smulls, if you have anything more to say, speak out.

*Smulls.* [*Puts the book in his coat-pocket.*] No, no. I have nothing more to say. Good day, sir.

[*Exit Smulls*, L. D.]

*Bibbins.* [*Rises. Pretends to be looking over some papers.*] I have much to be thankful for. I have been in my present business not quite ten years—had but little money when I started. I have lived well during all that time, and I am now worth, in real and personal property, more than thirty thousand dollars. Thank God!

[*Exit Bibbins*, L. D.]

SCENE III.—SMULLS *in Skipps' Court.*—*Kitchen in MRS. BELL'S house.*—MRS. BELL *seated at a table (C.) of stage.*

*Enter MRS. JONES, very much agitated*, L. D.

*Mrs. Jones.* I came to tell you, Mrs. Bell—oh, it is terrible!—that Smulls is in our court again. The horrid creature! Doubtless he came to levy upon the household goods of the court tenants. I saw him going from house to house.

*Mrs. Bell.* You don't say so! Then he will likely pay me a visit—oh, what a wretch that Bibbins must be! I do not believe that there is a tenant in the court who actually owes a week's rent.

*Mrs. Jones.* [*Takes a seat near the table.*] Neither do I. It is nothing more nor less than robbery to compel tenants to pay rent in advance.

*Mrs. Bell.* For my part, I cannot now, nor will I be able to pay this month's rent, within five days—to say nothing of the costs of levy, which, of course, will be added. So, my goods, if levied upon, will be sold. Oh, heavens! what shall I do? [*Weeps.*]

*Mrs. Jones.* Oh, don't take it so hard. Should Smulls levy upon your goods, you may find some way to prevent them from being sold. Something may turn up that will aid you. However, should things come



to the worst, you will not be any worse off than the rest of us, you know.

*Mrs. Bell.* You are right, Mrs. Jones ; I must not look at the darkest side. After all, Smulls may not levy upon my household goods, as I am only two days in arrear with my rent. But I wonder what Mr. and Mrs. Pippson and their children will do if they are sold out. He is and has been sick so long. They must be now very poor.

*Mrs. Jones.* Mr. Bibbins would not permit Smulls to levy upon their goods in their distressed state—not, at least, before the rent is actually due. He is not quite brute enough for that, I hope.

*Mrs. Bell.* Perhaps Bibbins does not know of the family's distressed condition?

[*Mrs. Bell goes to the window, W. E.*

*Mrs. Jones.* That is so. He may not know it ; but I am quite sure that Smulls does.

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh, come here, Mrs. Jones ! [*Mrs. Jones goes to the window.*] Look ! There is Smulls standing on Mr. Pippson's door steps—oh, the villian !

*Mrs. Jones.* So he is. There, he is going in—it is too bad. [*They return to the table and take seats.*

*Enter MRS. PIPPSON, much excited, L. D.*

*Mrs. Pippson.* Oh, oh ! what shall we do ? That old devil, Smulls, is in our house, and says he came to levy upon our goods. And my poor husband sick, too.

[*Weeps.*

*Mrs. B. and Mrs. J.* Oh, what a confounded shame !

[*They rise.*

*Mrs. Pippson.* Mrs. Jones will you please come with me into our house and help us persuade Smulls to have mercy upon us ?

*Mrs. Jones.* Certainly I will, though my husband and I are or will shortly be in the same boat of misery.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Pippson and Mrs. Jones, L. D.*

*Enter SMULLS, (R. D.) hat in hand.*

*Smulls.* How do you do, Mrs. Bell?

*Mrs. Bell.* Have you come, sir, to levy upon the household goods of a poor, lone widow? If so, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

*Smulls.* [*Looks at the stove.*] Well, you know that I must do my duty. But, however—hem.

*Mrs. Bell.* What do you mean by but, however? Oh, sir, do have pity upon me! To be turned out into the cold streets, homeless, would be awful. Oh! is there no way to soften your callous heart?

*Smulls.* [*Takes a seat near table.*] Don't talk in that manner to me again, if you please. What I meant by "but however" was that I was thinking that under the circumstances you might be willing to part with some of your goods. You have a nice stove there. Why—not sell it?

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh, sir, what could I get for it?—not half enough to pay my rent. No, that would never do—unless I could find some good-hearted soul to buy it who would pay me nearly its full value. You may need a stove like that one. If so, why not [*hesitates*] take it, and let me go with the rest of my goods?

*Smulls.* [*Aside.*] Oh, no. I do not want the stove.—No, madam; that you know would never do. I would be held responsible, and besides [*hesitates*] you have no place to go to, anyway.

*Mrs. Bell.* [*More hopeful.*] I pray you, sir, take it, and keep out of the way. I will remove my goods late at night. I shall never tell anybody that I gave you the stove.

*Smulls.* I will think over the matter. I must go now. [*Pretends to be anxious to go.*] I shall return within an hour. I do not see what use it would be to me.

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh, sir, the stove is quite new; you could sell it, if you do not need it. I can manage in

some way to do without it. [*Aside.*] Oh, Eternal Father! this is a terrible fix to be in. And the rent not actually due.—Do take the stove, sir, and let me go with the rest of my goods—will you?

*Smulls.* Well—as I do not wish to be considered a hard-hearted man—I will let you go, provided you promise to keep the matter to yourself.

*Mrs. Bell.* Oh, thank you, sir; how kind you are. I promise never, never, to speak of the matter to anyone—oh, believe me!

*Smulls.* I will trust you, anyway. I will to-night send a man for the stove. Do not fail to let him have it. [*Rises, goes to the R. D.*] Or you will have cause to regret it—remember that. [*Exit Smulls, R. D.*]

*Mrs. Bell.* How shall I manage to raise enough money to pay for having my goods removed from here? I am penniless. Let me see now! Oh, yes, I had forgotten that I have a gold ring—my wedding ring—I must pawn it. I can get at least two dollars on it. Oh, thank heaven! It will enable me to pay for the removal of my household goods from here. Oh! Lord, pity me. [*Weeps.*] [*Exit Mrs. Bell, L. D.*]

SCENE IV.—*Sitting-room in Mrs. Price's house.*—

WIDOW PRICE seated at a table (c.) of stage.

*Widow Price.* I need not now expect any mercy from Bibbins, the agent. I called him an inhuman wretch—but what else is he? Though I am half sorry now that I did so, on account of my poor children. He might have had pity upon us had I not done so, but I could not help it. His manner and words almost broke my heart. I was desperate.

*Enter FLORA, R. D.*

*Flora.* [*Goes to her mother.*] Oh, mother, I am so glad that sister Susan is getting better.

*Widow Price.* [*Embracing her.*] Yes, my dear, I know you are. We should be very thankful to God

for her improved condition—and we are. But, darling, you must not leave your sister Susan too long alone.

*Flora.* I will not, dear mother. I will return to her at once.

*Widow Price.* That is right, my pet. [*Caressing her.*] Now go. I will soon be with you.

[*Exit Flora, R. D.*]

*Enter SMULLS, after knocking, at R. D.*

*Smulls.* You are Mrs. Price, I believe.

*Widow Price.* Yes, sir, I am; what do you want? [*Aside.*] I do believe he is the constable referred to by Bibbins—oh, horrible!—Who are you?

*Smulls.* [*Takes a seat near table.*] I am, madam, an officer of the law, or, in plain words, a constable. You owe Mr. Bibbins a month's rent, which has been due for some time.

*Widow Price.* Only about three days, sir—in advance.

*Smulls.* You should be very thankful to Mr. Bibbins for having waited so long, I am sure.

*Widow Price.* Well, I am not, because I have no reason to be. On the contrary, your presence here is proof that he is about to act—through you—most inhumanly. I therefore have good reason to hate him.

*Smulls.* Hem—I must, of course, do my duty, madam.

*Widow Price.* Oh, sir, this is too terrible! Why, I cannot pay the rent, to say nothing of the costs of levy. It is possible that I may raise the money within a week to pay the rent—will you wait until then, sir? If you do, God will prosper you—I know He will. Have you no heart?

[*Weeps.*]

*Smulls.* I am sorry for you, madam. But I am compelled to do my duty. I would be held responsible by Mr. Bibbins now that the matter has been placed into my hands.

*Widow Price.* [*Aside.*] Oh! merciful heavens! raise some one up to aid me. O, God! forget me not! —Well, sir, if it is your duty to distress the poor I have nothing more to say. Do so, in the devil's name, not in God's.

*Smulls.* Why, madam, how you talk! You astonish me.

[*Here he brings from his coat-pocket a carte-blanche, and at once begins to fill it in.*]

*Widow Price.* Do you wish to see the up-stairs part of the house, sir.

*Smulls.* No, madam. There is no need to do so at present. This landlord's warrant distrains all goods now on the premises. If you do not pay the rent and the costs of levy or replevy the said goods within five days from this date an appraisement will be made. Then we will go through the house—not before. Should you be able to pay the rent and costs even after your goods shall have been appraised they will not then be sold.

*Widow Price.* Oh, sir; it will be impossible for me to raise money enough by that time to pay the rent and costs. [*Weeps.*]

*Smulls.* [*Rises.*] Here, madam, is a copy of the levy. [*He hands it to her; she takes it.*] You will find my address and office hours printed thereon. Should you be able to settle the matter within the prescribed time I will be pleased to have you call upon me. [*Goes to the door.*] I am very sorry to have been compelled to disturb you, madam; good day.

[*Exit Smulls, R. D.*]

*Widow Price.* I am glad that is over, at least, for the present. I am much relieved, though in deeper misery than before. God may yet raise some one up to aid me. Oh, would I not be thankful! Some years ago a report reached me of the death of an only brother, but I did not, do not, nor never shall as long as I live, believe it. Something tells me that he is still alive,



and will some day find out my whereabouts and come to me. Brother Will left home about fifteen years ago. Since which time both father and mother have departed this life. My husband died two years ago leaving me penniless, and with three children to support. Since which time I have struggled hard to keep poverty from entering our home. But, alas! hard-handed poverty has entered and I am powerless. God knows I need a helping hand! [Weeps.]

[Knocking at L. D. *Widow Price rises and opens it.*]

*Enter WILLIAM QUINBY, a gentleman of medium age.*

*Quinby.* Are you Mrs. Price?

*Widow Price.* Yes, sir, I am; what may your business be with me?

*Quinby.* It is soon told, madam. I overheard two women, who were in conversation at the entrance of the court, speak very feelingly of the distressed condition of a poor widow. I was passing at the time. I stopped and inquired of them the cause. They willingly related to me your story, or as much of it as they likely knew. I at once resolved to render some assistance to one who seemed so worthy. So here I am, ready, with your permission, to carry out that resolve. What say you?

*Widow Price.* I heartily thank you for your kind offer of assistance, but must decline to accept it owing to the fact that you are a total stranger to me. Some of the tenants, in the near-by court, are in deeper misery than even I am. Consequently, it seems rather odd—does it not—that you should desire to help me? Please be seated, sir. [They take seats near the table.]

*Quinby.* I was, madam, unaware of the unfortunate condition of the people residing in the court until you yourself informed me. But believe me, madam, in offering to assist you my motives were and are perfectly honorable.

*Widow Price.* I believe you, sir; indeed I do.



*Quinby.* I have always sympathized with those in distress, and have aided, in a pecuniary way—to the extent of my means—those whom I have met and found worthy. I am a stranger in this part of the country. I arrived in this city last night.

*Widow Price.* Have you traveled much, sir?

*Quinby.* Yes, madam, considerable, in this and other countries.

*Widow Price.* [*Aside.*] He may have met my brother in his travels.—Do you intend to remain in this city, sir?

*Quinby.* No, madam. I intend to leave here to-night, by train, for Baltimore City, Md., where I shall endeavor to find an only sister whom I have neither seen nor heard from nor of, for nearly fifteen years. I hope she is still alive. I have heard of the death of my parents.

*Widow Price.* What was the name of your sister? I had an only brother who left his parental home many years ago. At the time of his departure we resided on a farm situated on the Philadelphia road about seven miles from the city of Baltimore.

*Quinby.* [*With much agitation.*] My sister's name was Caroline Quinby.

*Widow Price.* [*Greatly agitated.*] Oh, sir, that was my maiden name! Can it be that you are my brother whom I have so long longed to see!

*Quinby.* My name is William Quinby. Did anything remarkable happen to your brother about two months previous to his departure from home? If so, what was it?

*Widow Price.* Yes. One day while he was riding a horse at full speed across a field the animal stumbled, in consequence of which my brother was thrown to the ground with great force. Several farm hands seeing the accident carried him into the house in an insensible condition.

*Quinby.* The facts you have related, have removed all my doubts. I am your brother ! [*They rise and embrace.*] Oh, my dear sister, Caroline ! How glad I am to see you !

*Widow Price.* God knows I am very glad to see you, dear brother Will. You have come none too soon to prevent myself and children from being turned out of doors homeless. [*Aside.*] Thank God, my prayers have been answered !

[*They here take seats near table.*]

*Quinby.* I am not rich, but I have managed to save a few thousand dollars. I presume you have now no objections to permit me to assist you. Have you ?

*Widow Price.* No, no, my dear brother.

*Quinby.* I will, to-morrow, pay the rent now due and the costs of levy, and before the present month expires I will have your goods removed to another and better house. What say you ?

*Widow Price.* That will be splendid. But, dear Will, [*she rises*] come with me ; I want you to see my dear children. I know they will be delighted to see their Uncle Will.

*Quinby.* Yes, dear Caroline. I will be very glad to see your darlings. [*Rises.*] We will go at once. [*Aside.*] Thanks be to God that I have found my dear sister, and that I have the means to raise her out of her miserable condition.

[*Exeunt Widow Price and Quinby, R. D.*]

END OF ACT I.

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Office.*—*Bibbins seated (L. S.) of desk (C.) of stage writing.*

*Enter* TIBBS, U. E.

*Bibbins.* Well, Tibbs, did you experience any difficulty in collecting the rents from the tenants in Bell Row?

*Tibbs.* [*Takes a seat at (R.) desk.*] No, sir.

*Bibbins.* I am glad to hear it. Did they pay up in full?

*Tibbs.* Yes, sir, they did, with one exception—Widow Falbus, who still owes a balance of four dollars. The amount of money that I collected I deposited in bank as usual. Here is the bank-book.

[*Hands it to him.*

*Bibbins.* [*Opens the book.*] Yes, I see it is all right. Did Mrs. Falbus state when she would pay the balance of her rent?

*Tibbs.* Yes, sir; within a few days, or as soon as she can dispose of her sitting-room stove.

*Bibbins.* What in the devil have I to do with her sitting-room stove. If she pays not to-day in full I shall to-morrow send Smulls to see her.

*Enter* MRS. FALBUS, U. E.

*Mrs. Falbus.* Mr. Bibbins, I called to ask a favor——

*Bibbins.* Well, what is it?

*Mrs. Falbus.* Will you be kind enough to wait until the latter part of next week for the balance of rent I owe you. If you do I will not then be compelled to part with my sitting-room stove to pay you?

*Bibbins.* I am sorry, madam, but I cannot grant your request.

*Mrs. Falbus.* You should consider, sir, that I have been a tenant of yours for almost two years. This is the first time that I have failed to pay my rent in full promptly in advance, though on several occasions I was forced to sell a part of my furniture to do so.

*Bibbins.* Madam, I have no fault to find with you so far as regards the past; it is the present time, on account of your failure to pay this month's rent in full. *That is all—*

*Mrs. Falbus.* Oh, sir! you will at least wait a few days to give me time to sell my sitting-room stove to raise the money to pay you, won't you?

*Bibbins.* No, madam, I cannot wait. I am simply agent not owner of the property, you know.

*Mrs. Falbus.* I think it is a sin, sir, to so oppress the poor. Why, it seems to me that the poor under the present state of society would not be allowed to exist at all were they not an indispensable part of the world's machinery through whose workings great wealth is produced. The cream of which goes to the few, the milk and water to the many. Thus the rich are getting richer, the poor poorer. But, sir, you will have pity upon me? *[Weeps.]*

*Bibbins.* How you talk, woman. I gave you my answer. I feel sorry for you, certainly.

*Mrs. Falbus.* *[Contemptuously.]* Yes you do! But, sir, the day may not be far distant when you will feel sorry—not for me—but for yourself, you vampire!

*[Exit Mrs. Falbus, U. E.]*

*Bibbins.* *[Rises in great agitation.]* Confound that impertinent jade. The devil has certainly been let loose amongst my tenants. However, I will get square with her. *[Takes a seat.]* I shall send Smulls to her house to-morrow. Oh, the ingrate!

*Enter SMULLS, U. E.*

*Smulls.* Have you, sir *[to Mr. Bibbins]*, anything on hand at present in my line of business?

*Bibbins.* Yes. I want you to go to Mrs. Falbus' house to-morrow morning and levy upon her household goods. See to it, too, that she does not get away with her goods.

*Smulls.* All right, sir; I will attend to the matter properly.

*Bibbins.* Did you carry out my orders regarding my tenants in Skipps' court?

*Smulls.* I did, sir, in every particular.

*Bibbins.* That was right. Well——

*Smulls.* [*Hesitatingly.*] But, sir, Mrs. Bell got away with her goods on the very night of the day that I made the levy.

*Bibbins.* Oh, the devil she did! Why did you not see to the matter better? Did you watch the place? If so, how did she manage to get away with her goods?

*Smulls.* No, sir; I did not watch her house personally, but I had a man to do so. Unfortunately he was compelled to return to his home about midnight through sudden sickness—so he told me the next morning. But never fear, sir, I shall find out where Mrs. Bell has moved to long before the thirty days are up. [*Aside.*] Of course I will.—Ah! ah! ah!

*Bibbins.* Why, Smulls, you seem pleased.

*Smulls.* No, sir, I am not. But I will be pleased when I find out the whereabouts of that ungrateful woman, Mrs. Bell. Oh, won't I though!—Ah! ah!

*Bibbins.* The case is in your hands, so do your best to find out where she has moved to. But, in the meantime keep a sharp lookout upon the rest of the tenants in Skipps' court. If you do not some of the others may also give you the slip.

*Smulls.* There is not the least danger, sir. I now have the court well watched day and night, so you see it is impossible for any of them to remove their goods without being detected.

*Bibbins.* Very well; I am satisfied now with your



present management of the affair;—I have implicit confidence in you, you know.

*Smulls.* Indeed I do, sir. And your confidence in me has never been, is not nor never shall be abused. Good day, sir. [*Exit Smulls*, U. E.]

*Bibbins.* [*To Tibbs.*] You go at once to Mr. Bennett's house, and collect the rent. It is due to-day.

*Tibbs.* [*Rises.*] All right, sir.

[*Exit Tibbs*, U. E.]

*Bibbins.* It is just possible that Mrs. Bell paid Smulls a few dollars to let her go with her household goods. No, no; I will not believe that he would be guilty of such perfidy—at least, not without some proof.

*Enter BROWN (U. E.), the tinroofer.*

*Brown.* How do you do, Mr. Bibbins. I called to say that I have repaired the roof of that Elder street house.

*Bibbins.* I am pleased with your promptness, sir. How much is your bill? I may as well pay you now.

*Brown.* Five dollars, sir; but you need not pay it now. I have not the bill made out.

*Bibbins.* Then make it out at once for—say nine dollars. I must get paid for my trouble, you know.

[*Here he hands Brown a sheet of paper.*]

*Brown.* [*Takes a seat at desk.*] Of course you ought to. [*Writing.*] Here, sir [*hands the bill receipted*], I have made it out for nine dollars.

*Bibbins.* [*Hands Mr. Brown a five-dollar note.*] Here, sir, is your money. That is right, Mr. Brown, I believe.

*Brown.* [*Hesitating.*] Hem—oh, yes; I thank you, sir. [*Rises.*] Good day. [*Exit Brown*, U. E.]

*Bibbins.* Brown appeared astonished when I handed him the five-dollar note. I suppose he expected me to share the other four dollars with him.—



Ah ! ah ! ah ! My running expenses are too great for that. I cannot, of course, do the same on large bills. After all, it is a mere matter of business, and it is done every day. *[Exit Bibbins, U. E.]*

SCENE II.—*Library in Bibbins' residence.*—BIBBINS seated at a table (C.) of stage, reading a book.

*Enter TOM GRIMES, a servant, R. D.*

*Tom.* There is a gentleman in the parlor who wishes to see you, sir.

*Bibbins.* Did the gentleman give his name ?

*Tom.* No, sir ; though I requested him to do so.

*Bibbins.* I will see the gentleman, whoever he may be. Show him up at once. *[Continues to read.]*

*Tom.* All right, sir. *[Exit Tom, R. D.]*

*Bibbins.* *[Looking up.]* Well, well ! I wonder who he can be. *[Continues to read.]*

*Re-enter TOM, followed by the gentleman (QUINBY), R. D.*

*Tom.* Here is the gentleman, sir.

*Bibbins.* *[Lays book aside, rises and offers a chair to the stranger.]* Take a seat, sir. *[To Tom.]* You may go now. *[Exit Tom, R. D.]*

*Quinby.* Thank you, sir. *[Sits down.]* My name is William Quinby.

*Bibbins.* *[Takes a seat.]* And mine, I presume you already know, is Thomas Bibbins.

*Quinby.* *[Rises.]* Yes, sir, I do ; and I am pleased to make your acquaintance, sir.

*Bibbins.* *[Rises.]* Thank you, sir. *[Here they shake hands ; they then take seats near table.]* What may your business be with me, sir ?

*Quinby.* I have only recently returned to this country after an absence of nearly fifteen years. I have made a great deal of money during which time, and have managed to save some thousands of dollars. Now my object in calling upon you is to get your judgment regarding real estate in general.

*Bibbins.* Then I presume, sir, your idea is to invest your money in real estate. If so, it is a capital idea I can assure you.

*Quinby.* Yes, sir, I think of doing so.

*Bibbins.* Should you conclude to do so, my advice would be to invest your money in small or medium-sized dwelling-houses, which, when properly managed, pays as high as twelve per cent. interest per year.

*Quinby.* Have you, sir, in your calculation, allowed for losses which at times must be great through the inability of tenants, at times, to pay their rents? On account of, for instance, sickness, non-employment or death, as small- and medium-sized houses are as a rule occupied by those who depend entirely upon their daily labor for the means of support.

*Bibbins.* No, sir, I have not, for the simple reason that property owners sustain no loss through their tenants not being able to pay their rent no matter from what cause arises their inability to do so. Incidental losses have been taken into account, as a matter of course.

*Quinby.* I don't understand how such losses as I have mentioned can be avoided. Will you please to explain, sir?

*Bibbins.* I will, sir, with great pleasure. When a tenant rents a house from the owner or his agent, as the case may be, he is compelled to sign a lease, in which he agrees to pay the rent punctually in advance monthly on the day it falls due. And further agrees, that all goods on the premises, and for thirty days after removal, shall be liable to distress for non-payment of rent, and also waives the benefits of all exemption laws in relation thereto, and also from a levy and sale under a writ of execution issued upon any judgment obtained against him for the recovery of said rent or any part thereof. In fact, sir, the lease gives unto the owner or his agent absolute power relative thereto in

case of the non-fulfilment, on the part of the tenant, of any of the covenants contained in the lease.

*Quinby.* Is there no interest allowed for the money thus forced from the tenants in advance?

*Bibbins.* No; certainly not. So, sir, you can easily understand from what I have said that landlords do not lose any money through the inability of tenants to pay their rents.

*Quinby.* Yes, sir, I understand perfectly, and it seems to me that tenants, especially the poor ones, are nothing more nor less than slaves of the rich, who neither have to clothe nor feed them. The slave-owners of the South were compelled to do both.

*Bibbins.* Ah! ah! You have certainly hit the nail on the head, sir. By all means invest in real estate—nothing more safe and profitable.

*Quinby.* [*Seriously.*] Well, sir, I would dislike to have a man's household goods sold for non-payment of a month's rent actually due under any circumstances, but to do so for non-payment of advance rent, in my opinion, would be nothing more nor less than robbery.

*Bibbins.* [*Agitated.*] I am truly sorry that you hold such an opinion; you astonish me. I would have been more circumspect, sir, had I not felt sure that, as a matter of course, you would think such treatment of tenants praiseworthy. We—meaning men in my line of business—as a rule do not consider it robbery to sell a man's goods for non-payment of advance rent.

*Quinby.* Well, sir, I cannot see the matter in any other light.

*Bibbins.* Is it not, sir, the tenants fault if he fails to live up to his agreement? I am sure it is neither the fault of the landlord nor his agent, his failure to do so. We look upon the matter in a purely business light, and, of course, I expected you would do likewise.

*Quinby.* Then, sir, I presume that unless I should be willing to have such inhuman acts committed upon tenants in distress it would be folly for me to invest money in small, or, in fact, in any sized houses with the expectation of making a profit such as you mentioned.

*Bibbins.* [*Hesitating.*] Well, sir, to be candid with you, I must say that it would be unwise to do so.

*Quinby.* Do not tenants complain, sir, of the evident injustice of being forced to waive the benefits of the exemption laws mentioned, and the miseries which frequently follow their involuntary acts?

*Bibbins.* As a matter of course they do, but what can they do about it? They must live in houses, consequently they are compelled to rent them under the "iron-clad lease system," which is almost universal in this country.

*Quinby.* Well, sir, I thank you for the important information which you have been pleased to impart to me, but I do not think that I will invest money in real estate—not at present at least.—[*Aside.*]—I will see what can be done to break up this iron-clad lease business.—[*Rises.*]—I will now take my departure.

*Bibbins.* [*Rings the bell.*] Wait, sir, if you please until the servant appears.

*Quinby.* I will, sir.

*Enter* TOM GRIMES, R. D.

*Bibbins.* [*Rises.*] Tom, show the gentleman out.  
[*They go to R. D.*] Good day, Mr. Quinby.

*Quinby.* Good day, sir.

[*Exeunt Tom and Quinby, R. D.*]

*Bibbins.* [*Takes a seat.*] Well, well; that Quinby fellow is a fool. He stands in his own light in holding such opinions, yet, I confess, he is on the side of justice. From that very fact there is considerable danger that he will soon be as poor as the proverbial church mouse. [*Rises.*] An old saying, and a true one, is "that a fool and his money are soon parted."—Ah! ah! ah!

[*Exit Bibbins, U. E.*]



SCENE III.—*Sitting-room in Widow Price's house.*—

MRS. PRICE *seated near a table (c.) of stage; her three children are present.*—SUSAN *seated in an arm-chair near-by.*

*Widow Price.* [To Susan.] Do you feel well enough, my dear, to wait up to see your Uncle William? He promised to come here to-night.

*Susan.* Yes, dear mother, I do. I love Uncle William. I hope he will come. Can I wait up to see him?

*Widow Price.* Yes, dear; and so may Flora and Richard, if they wish to do so.

*Flora and Richard.* We will be very glad to see our Uncle William, so we will wait up until he comes.

*Widow Price.* No wonder that you all love your uncle so much. Had it not been for his generosity we would most likely be homeless, or almost so.

[Knocking at door, U. E.]

*All the children.* Maybe that is Uncle William; we hope so.

[Widow Price opens the door.]

*Enter QUINBY, U. E.*

*Widow Price.* Welcome, brother William. We are glad to see you.

*Quinby.* Thank you, my dear sister. I am glad to be so kindly received. [Goes to Susan, kisses her, then the other children.] How have you all been during my absence?

*Widow Price.* Pretty well, considering our late experience. Susan is much improved in health.

*Quinby.* I am very glad that she is. I suppose you children waited up on purpose to see me. Am I right?

*All the children.* You are, dear Uncle William!

*Quinby.* Then I will reward you. [Here he shares a bag of candy amongst them.] What should you say for it?

*All the children.* Thank you, Uncle William ; you are very kind—we love you very much.

*Quinby.* I am very glad you do.

*Widow Price.* Come children, you must now go to bed, so say good night to your kind uncle.

*All the children.* Good night, dear Uncle William.

*Quinby.* [*Caresses them.*] Good night, dear children. [*Exeunt mother and children (U. E.) ; Susan supported by her mother.*] Well, well ! [*Here he takes a seat near the table.*] How could any man have the heart to turn such dear, little children out into the streets homeless ? Yet such would have been the case had I not happened to turn up just in time to prevent it. Thank God that I was able to do so. And such inhuman acts Bibbins views from a purely business standpoint. Oh, what a wretch he must be to do so.

*Enter FINN (U. E.), a detective in the employ of Quinby.*

*Finn.* Good evening, Mr. Quinby.

*Quinby.* [*Rises.*] Good evening, sir. Take a seat. Anything new to impart to me concerning the affair we have on hand ? If so, I am ready to hear it.

*Finn.* Yes, sir. [*Here they take seats near the table.*] I have.

*Quinby.* Well, proceed, sir.

*Finn.* I will at once, and state that I have been entirely unsuccessful in my earnest endeavors to persuade even one of the hundred or more owners of property of the city whom I visited during the past week to agree in writing or otherwise to the very reasonable, and I may add humane, request, to the effect that they, the property owners, would not in the future sell nor cause to be sold the household goods or any part thereof, of any tenant of theirs renting under the iron-clad lease system, for non-payment of a month's rent, not even when the same is actually due when the failure to pay is caused by the poverty of the tenant or tenants as the case may be. Provided, the person



or persons so circumstanced shall vacate such premises within five days from the receipt of a printed or written notification to that effect, from either the owner or his agent. All such notices shall bear the date of the following day—Sundays excepted—on which the rent is actually due. This shall apply only to persons of good repute.

*Quinby.* Did you mention to the gentlemen to whom you spoke of the matter that unless they were willing to grant the request, that an association would be organized for the purpose of protecting tenants from the injustice of landlords and their agents? If so, what answer made they, if any?

*Finn.* I did, sir. A few only replied to the threat, and they did so in an indifferent manner to the effect that no association would ever be able to prevent landlords from compelling tenants to sign an iron-clad lease—so called—or waiving the benefits of all exemption laws relating thereto. Whether just or unjust the same would be continued and advance rent be demanded. They treated the whole affair as not being worthy of their serious consideration.

*Quinby.* Well, what about the tenants' side of the question? Do they, as a rule, take kindly to the idea of organizing an anti-iron-clad lease and protective association, do you know?

*Finn.* Well, sir, according to the written report of my assistants the idea was everywhere received and seconded in a most hearty manner, by all classes of tenants. This was specially the case by those occupying medium- and small-sized dwelling houses.

*Quinby.* Such being the case I feel overjoyed, though I expected just such a report. Now, then, as the property owners whom you visited have refused to grant the request, and as others who own real estate would most likely do likewise, I conclude that the next best thing to do would be to call a meeting of tenants and explain to them my plans with a view to organ-

izing the proposed association, and abide by their decision in the matter. What say you?

*Finn.* I think that would be the proper course to pursue. When shall the proposed meeting take place?

*Quinby.* Let me see—this is Wednesday. How would next Tuesday evening do?

*Finn.* Very well, I think. Where do you intend to hold the meeting?

*Quinby.* With your permission—in the sitting-room of your residence. What say you?

*Finn.* I most willingly consent to the proposition, and grant permission to hold the meeting at my house. I will as soon as possible make all the necessary arrangements relating thereto.

*Quinby.* Well, do so. Now, that matter being settled to our joint satisfaction, I wish to know whether you have as yet received any information tending to verify your suspicions regarding Mr. Bibbins?

*Finn.* No, sir; not as yet, but I expect to know in a short time whether Bibbins is really David Gribbs, the man who is wanted for committing forgery or not, as I have an expert detective working on the case. In the meantime it is meet that the matter be kept dark.

*Quinby.* I have not spoken of the affair to anyone except yourself, nor will I do so until you deem it both proper and safe.

*Finn.* That will doubtless be the proper course to pursue in the matter. Having nothing more of importance to communicate to you I will go.

[*Finn rises.*

*Quinby.* [*Rises.*] All right, sir. I will see you to the front door. [*Fxeunt Quinby and Finn, U. E.*

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A street.*

*Enter (L. E.) SMULLS, followed by MILLARD, the auctioneer, and his assistant JIM. FOGG, with a red flag in his right hand.—They stop at (C.) of stage.*

*Smulls.* [*To Millard.*] This is a very cold morning, sir. Why, I am nearly frozen. [*Rubs his hands together.*] I do not believe that there will be very many people at the sale to-day, it is too intensely cold.

*Millard.* [*To Smulls.*] I think you are right. It is certainly very cold, but we are sure to have plenty of those second-hand furniture dealers at the sale. I have never known it cold enough to keep that class of people away from a constable's sale.

*Smulls.* [*To Millard.*] The people in Skipp's court have but little furniture in their homes, and what they have is pretty well worn out. I don't believe that their household effects will bring enough money to pay the expenses of the sale—Ah! ah! ah!

*Millard.* [*To Smulls.*] I am glad that such is the case.—The shorter the horse the sooner it is curried, as the old saying has it—Ah! ah! ah!

*Fogg.* [*To Millard.*] I should think, sir, the more goods the more money you would get for selling them, as I presume you are to do the job on the percentage plan, as is usual?

*Millard.* [*To Fogg.*] No, I am not. I have agreed with Mr. Bibbins to do the job for a certain amount of money, so you see that it will make no difference to me, nor to the tenants either as far as I can see, whether their goods bring five dollars (\$5.00) or a hundred—Ah! ah! ah!

*Fogg.* [*To Millard.*] Well, sir, such being the case, you can well afford to laugh—Ah! ah! ah!

*Smulls.* Well, gentlemen, we had better move on. [*Looking at his watch.*] It is now half-past eight o'clock. It will be nine before we can reach the court, and the sale is to begin at 9.30, you know.

*Millard.* You are right, Smulls. Let us go at once.

*Fogg.* So say I—Ah! ah! ah!

[*Exeunt (R. E.) Smulls and Millard, followed by Fogg, waving the red flag.*]

*Enter (L. E.) MRS. PIPPSON, a tenant of Skipps' court, in great agitation.*

*Mrs. Pippson.* Oh, it is a terrible cold morning. I have been up and out of doors since six o'clock seeking a temporary home for my poor, sick husband, myself, and our children, but without success. We will be homeless before the sun sets this day unless some kind soul gives us shelter. Oh, oh! what shall we do? [*Weeps bitterly.*]

*Enter MRS. DE HUFF (R. E.), an elderly lady, on her way to her home.*

*Mrs. De Huff.* [*Goes to her.*] What is the matter with you, my poor child? Don't cry, but tell me your trouble.

*Mrs. Pippson.* [*Stops crying.*] Oh! dear, kind lady, I am almost heart-broken, because we—my sick husband, myself and dear little ones—will have no home to shelter us by night-fall. [*Weeps.*]

*Mrs. De Huff.* Don't cry, madam, but tell me who you are, where you live and the reason you have for saying that you and your family will be homeless when the sun goes down.

*Mrs. Pippson.* My name is Mrs. Julia Pippson. We live in Skipps' court. We, and other tenants of the court, are to be sold out to-day for non-payment of a month's rent due in advance.



*Mrs. De Huff.* Oh! horrible! On such a day as this! How I do pity you all from the bottom of my heart.

*Mrs. Pippson.* I believe you do, madam. And I feel grateful to you for it.

*Mrs. De Huff.* [*Here the old lady puts her arm about the waist of Mrs. Pippson and looks at her intently.*] Since I come to look at you closer, your face seems familiar to me. What was your maiden name, my dear?

*Mrs. Pippson.* Julia Sans.

*Mrs. De Huff.* Julia Sans! Oh, mercy on me! Was your mother's name Mrs. Eliza Sans, whose husband was a shoemaker?

*Mrs. Pippson.* Yes, madam.

*Mrs. De Huff.* Lord bless me, you don't say so? You are the very image of your mother when she was your age. How well I remember her. You were a mere child when you were left an orphan, and when I saw you last. Come, my dear, with me, you and yours shall make your home with me as long as you may see fit to do so.

*Mrs. Pippson.* [*Embracing the old lady.*] May God bless you, dear lady, for your kind offer, which madam, I thankfully accept. [*Weeps.*]

*Mrs. De Huff.* [*Kisses her.*] Don't weep, my dear, but come along with me. I am a childless widow and live alone. My house is large, so there is plenty of room for you and yours.

[*Exeunt (L. E.) Mrs. De Huff and Mrs. Pippson.—The former's arm about the latter.*]

*Enter (R. E.) BIBBINS and his clerk, TIBBS.—Both stop at (C.) of stage.*

*Tibbs.* It is a pretty cold day to sell anybody out of—as the saying goes—house and home. I pity those poor people in Skipps' court, who are to be sold out to-day.



*Bibbins.* [*Much astonished.*] Why, you confounded ass! What has come over you? You to sympathize with people who do not pay their rent, and you thinking of and expecting to read law. You would make a nice lawyer. You would starve to death with such sentiments—bah!

*Tibbs.* But, sir, you should take into consideration that I am myself poor. Such being the case, I naturally sympathize with those in a like condition, especially when in distress, as the court people certainly are at the present time.

*Bibbins.* Yes, that is true. Yet, Tibbs, should you permit what are termed natural promptings of the heart to fully develop you would finally be controlled by them, and, in consequence, you would most likely remain poor, though honest. My advice is to suppress such promptings of the heart, or your higher nature, while you can, and be governed by self-interest and reason as all rich men are, or, at least, have been, else they would not be rich.

*Tibbs.* Cannot a man by acting conscientiously in all his business dealings with his fellow-men become what is nowadays considered wealthy?

*Bibbins.* No man can become rich in any line of business that I am acquainted with or have any knowledge of without first throwing his conscience—should he possess such an article—to the dogs. But it is possible for a man to become wealthy nowadays by simply acting in accordance with what are termed present-day business principles, which, I must confess, are rather too lax. I have now said all that I intend to say, at present, regarding the subject. Let us move on.

*Tibbs.* [*As they walk away.*] I thank you for your advice, and I will think over what you have said, sir.

[*Exeunt* (L. E.) *Bibbins and Tibbs.*]

SCENE II.—*A side view of Skipp's court after the sale.*

—SMULLS, MILLARD, and FOGG stand (C.) of stage.

—*The recent court tenants stand about the front of the houses.—Their trunks, bundles, etc., nearby.*

*Millard.* [To *Smulls.*] That was a quick job. The second-hand furniture dealers bought every article sold, paying, as usual, about one-third value.

*Smulls.* [To *Millard.*] You are right, sir ; it was a quick job, and the dealers were well pleased with their bargains. No wonder—ah ! ah ! ah ! But come, gentlemen, let us go and get something to drink to warm us up a little. What say you ?

*Millard and Fogg.* We don't care if we do.

[*Exeunt Smulls, Millard, and Fogg, R. E.*]

*Enter QUINBY and FINN, L. E.*

*Finn.* [Goes to (C.) of stage.] Ladies and gentlemen : If you will be quiet for a few minutes I will introduce to you the originator of the idea of organizing an anti-iron-clad lease and protective association.

*The Tenants.* We will, we will !

[*Quinby comes forward.*]

*Finn.* Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Quinby.

*The Tenants.* Huzza ! huzza ! Long live Mr. Quinby.

[*Quinby bows politely.*]

*Finn.* You have all, doubtless, heard or read of the commotion that our friend of the poor here [*pointing to Quinby*] and his lieutenants are creating among the landlords and their agents throughout the city.

*The Tenants.* Yes, yes ; we have. Huzza ! huzza !

*Finn.* I will now give the floor to Mr. Quinby.

*Quinby.* [*Gets upon a box, then makes a bow.*]

Ladies and gentlemen, I did not come here to make a speech, but came to inform you that I have, with Mr. Finn's assistance, made arrangements for your temporary needs. [*Cries of "May God bless you!"*] I therefore hope to see you all at our meeting to-morrow

night. You, of course, know where it is to be held. Am I right in thinking so?

*Tenants.* You are, and we will be there.

*Quinby.* It is too cold to remain here any longer. I therefore request you all to come with us, and we will conduct you to your temporary homes a few squares distant.—[*Quinby gets down from the box and walks with Finn towards the (R. E.) amid cries of "Let's carry the gentleman, our benefactor—Huzza! huzza! huzza!"*]*—No, gentlemen, I would prefer to walk. Many thanks, gentlemen.*

[*Here Quinby is picked up bodily and carried off the stage (R. E.), followed by the crowd (except Finn), with cries of "Long live the protector of the poor—Huzza! huzza! huzza!"*]

*Finn.* [*Near R. E.*] Well does the name become him! [*Exit Finn, R. E.*]

SCENE III.—*Street in front of Detective Finn's residence; over the door a sign reading: "Tenants' meeting will be held here to-night at 7.30. All are welcome. The meeting will be addressed by William Quinby, Esq., 'the friend of the poor.'"*

*Enter QUINBY and FINN, L. E. They stand in centre of stage.*

*Quinby.* [*Looking at his watch.*] We are a little too early. It is just seven o'clock.

*Finn.* I told you that we had plenty of time. We might have attended to that little business matter before coming here, but no matter now. To-morrow will answer almost as well. By-the-by—I heard to-day that Mr. Bibbins and his clerk, Tibbs, intend to be present at our meeting to-night.

*Quinby.* So did I, and I hope they will attend. Finn, have your suspicions regarding Bibbins as yet been confirmed?

*Finn.* Yes, sir, they have, but let us not speak further about the matter until after the meeting, when I will inform you fully regarding the same.

*Quinby.* Very well; that will be time enough. Now, let us go in.

QUINBY and FINN enter the house via door, almost immediately followed by men and women, the late (or recent) tenants of Skipps' court, and others. Lastly by MR. BIBBINS and his clerk, TIBBS. They stop at the house-door. Bibbins looks up at the sign.

*Bibbins.* [To Tibbs.] A pretty big sign, anyway. But what puzzles me is, why people are not satisfied with the existing state of things. I do not believe in agitation. I like quietness. That Quinby fellow is the direct cause of all this commotion, which, however, is a mere bubble. It will soon burst and that will end it. But come, let us go in anyway.

[*Bibbins and Tibbs enter house via door.*]

SCENE IV. *Sitting-room in Detective Finn's residence.*

*Men and women seated. QUINBY and FINN seated, one (L.), the other (R.) of table. Location, one end of the room.*

*Finn.* [Rises.] Ladies and gentlemen, I will now introduce to you our friend and fellow-townsmen—the philanthropist, cut as it were from the pure metal of philanthropy—Mr. William Quinby.

[*Here Quinby rises and makes a bow, amid loud applause, with cries of. "Speech! Speech!"*]

*Quinby.* [To Finn.] You will please act as Secretary of this meeting.

*Finn.* [Prepares to take down notes.] I will, sir.

*Quinby.* Ladies and gentlemen, I heartily thank you for your kind reception, though I am not vain enough to suppose that this outburst of feelings on your part are due to other than the cause I advocate,



and not to myself as an individual. [*Continued applause.*] This is to be considered an informal meeting. Should my views meet with your approval, another meeting will be held here this night one week hence—in a formal manner—for the purpose of organizing an association to be known as “The Anti-Iron-Clad Lease and Protective Association.”

Landlords and their agents have had their own sweet will long enough. I therefore think it is high time for tenants to have their say.—[*All. Applause, with cries of “That is so !”*].—Just to think of it—landlords, real estate agents and constables constitute a law unto themselves. So it seems to me. For, by forcing tenants to waive the benefits of all exemption laws relating thereto, they have full power (in case of non-payment of rent not actually due) to distrain and sell the household goods of their tenants—the fruits, possibly, of many years of toil—and turn them out into the streets homeless. This is not a fairy tale. This is not an overdrawn picture, but indisputable facts. There are persons present who can testify to the truth of my remarks, as they were themselves recently victims of such inhuman treatment.—[*Applause, with cries of “Yes, yes ; too true, too true ! God bless you, sir !”*].—Therefore I consider it right and proper to urge tenants to organize, to protect themselves from the unjust demands of owners and agents of dwelling-houses. [*Applause, with cries of “We will ! we will.”*]

My plans are : Firstly—That the proposed association shall not recognize as binding, on the part of its members, any written, printed, or other agreement or lease waiving the benefits of the exemption laws, or any part thereof, in relation thereto, whether signed previous to or after becoming members of the association. All such acts shall be considered as involuntary, consequently not obligatory.

Secondly—No member shall be allowed either to pay rent in advance or to sign any lease or contract, written, printed, or otherwise, got up for any place of abode except the leases of the association, which shall be supplied to owners of property, their agents, and others, such as those who may have furnished



or unfurnished room or rooms or parts of houses to let, free of charge on application.

Thirdly—The association's leases shall, for the most part, be printed, and got up or worded in such a manner so as to be in accordance with the laws of equity. No equivocal word or words shall be permitted therein.

*[Applause, with cries of "Good, good !"]*

Fourthly—The president of the association shall have the power conferred upon him to appoint a committee, to consist of three reputable gentlemen members of the society, to serve one year from date of appointment. Each to receive not more than five hundred dollars (\$500) for his services. This committee shall investigate every and all complaints that may be made to the association by its members.

Fifthly—The association shall extend aid to its indigent members in good standing not exceeding in any one year more than fifty dollars (\$50). The same shall apply to members temporarily embarrassed, through sickness or any other unavoidable causes. Provided such members possess, in household goods, not more than three hundred dollars (\$300). This shall be ascertained, by appraisalment, by the special committee referred to.

Sixthly—A member's household goods, to the amount of three hundred dollars (\$300), shall be exempt from levy and sale for non-payment of rent, even when actually due, by reason of Article I., or as hereafter shall be determined. Should a tenant be unable to pay his rent by reason of sickness or other unavoidable causes, and his case comes not within the meaning of Article VI., or if so, and he has already received the benefits therein conferred or in proportion thereof, as shall be his right to claim, accordingly as he may at the time occupy a house, room, or rooms therein, he shall, under such circumstances, vacate the premises within five days after the rent is actually due. Provided he has received a written or printed notice to that effect from the owner, or his agent, of such property, or from any person having a rightful charge thereof, no matter what the time of year. The neglect or refusal, on the part of tenant, to comply with such notice, he shall thereby forfeit his right to membership. The same shall apply to all members of the association under like circumstances herein described.

*[Applause, with cries of "That is fair enough."]*

Seventhly—Only reputable tenants shall be eligible to membership.

Eighthly—Men only of good repute and known integrity shall be eligible to hold any office of profit or non-profit in the association. Neither the wealth nor the poverty of applicants for official positions in the association shall be taken into consideration.

*[Loud applause.]*

Ninthly—When the proposed association gets into good working order a petition signed by all of its members shall be sent to the State Legislature, praying that a law be passed or made making it a misdemeanor for any person or persons owning dwelling-house or houses or any place of abode, or those having an interest therein, or any part thereof, such as furnished or unfurnished room, rooms, or parts of houses in any city or town within this Commonwealth, to rent or to let the same or any part thereof to any person or persons for any unlawful or immoral purpose or purposes, or to ask, request, demand, or permit any person or persons to sign any kind of lease or agreement, written, printed, or otherwise got up, thereby waiving the benefits of the exemption laws, or any part thereof, that are now made, or that may hereafter be made, in relation thereto. And on conviction thereof shall be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500) or undergo an imprisonment not exceeding two years, either or both as the case or cases may demand in the opinion of the court.

[*Applause, with cries of "That idea is good, very good."*]

Lastly—The association shall by degrees extend its protecting arms to all reputable renters of dwelling-houses or places of abode in cities and towns until they—the arms—encircle, as it were, our blessed country. Its male members in time shall enter the political field. The sole aim or object shall be to bring about a political reformation by supporting any political party, by votes and otherwise, that shall promise to abrogate all unjust laws or those favoring the few, either State or national, to the detriment of the many, and to make or pass laws favoring the masses of our people, thereby preventing the centralization of capital or the power of the rich to enslave the poor.

I have done. What say you? Shall we meet here again this night one week hence for the purpose of organizing an anti-iron-clad lease and protective association in accordance with my view relative thereto?

[*Applause, with cries of "Yes, yes; we will, we will!"*]

So be it then. I heartily thank you all for your kind attention and approbation, so good night to one and all.

[*Exeunt Quinby and Finn, R. D., followed by the crowd shouting "Long live the advocate of the rights of the honorable poor. Huzza! huzza! huzza!" Bibbins and Tibbs remain behind, near the R. D.*]

*Bibbins.* [*To Tibbs.*] It may not turn out to be a mere bubble as I at first thought it would.

[*Exeunt Bibbins and Tibbs, R. D.*]

END OF ACT III.

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Bibbins' office.*—TIBBS seated at the (L. S.) of writing-desk (C.) of stage, reading a newspaper.

*Enter BIBBINS (U. E.). Takes a seat (R. S.) of desk.*

*Bibbins.* Well, Tibbs, did you collect the rents that you were sent after?

*Tibbs.* [*Lays the paper aside.*] Yes, sir; I did. And deposited the money in bank, according to your orders. Here is the bank-book.

[*Tibbs hands the book to Bibbins.*]

*Bibbins.* [*Looks in the book.*] Yes, I see it is all right. Have you seen Smulls lately?

*Tibbs.* Yes, sir; I saw him yesterday. He promised to call here this morning.

*Enter SMULLS, U. E.*

*Bibbins.* Well, Smulls, you are come at last, I see.

*Smulls.* Yes, sir; I am here, as you see. The fact is, I take very little interest in my business now-a-days, for the simple reason it does not pay me to do so. That association, curse it, has ruined my business.

*Bibbins.* Confound the association! It has caused me a great deal of trouble, and it is likely to cause me more. My tenants are all members of the so-called "Anti-Iron-Clad Lease and Protective Association," consequently refuse to pay advance rent. Some of my tenants are now in arrears with their rent two weeks.

Had this happened some months ago they would have begged for mercy, but now all is changed.

*Smulls.* Yes, sir ; you are right. All is changed, and the end, I fear, is not yet come, as the association is becoming more powerful every day. I suppose you have read or heard about Mr. Robert Benson, the rich philanthropist, sending his bank check for fifty thousand dollars to the association a few days ago. What do you think of that?

*Bibbins.* Yes. I saw and read an account of it in one of the daily morning newspapers, and I think he was an old idiot for having done so.

*Tibbs.* The impediments which now block the way of landlords and their agents and which prevent them from reigning supremely, as they once did in their respective fields of action, have been placed there by themselves by their ever too-readiness to sell their tenants out for non-payment of advance rent. That Skipp's court affair was a step too far—a wholesale selling out, as it were. One at a time would have been a better way to have accomplished the desired result, speaking from a business standpoint.

*Bibbins.* I do not agree with you, Tibbs, because I know you are wrong. The society would probably never have been formed had not that Quinby fellow turned up when he did. You know that he found his sister, Mrs. Price, as poor as the proverbial church mouse, and her household goods distrained for non-payment of a month's rent due in advance. These facts aroused his sympathy, and to avenge what he considered an injustice he and a few others aroused the feelings of tenants, in general, up against owners and agents of property, in consequence of which the association was organized.

*Tibbs.* [*To Bibbins.*] I think you are right, sir. Are you aware of the fact that Mr. Quinby is president of the society?

*Bibbins.* Yes, Tibbs ; I am aware of the fact.



*Enter A GENTLEMAN, U. E.*

*Gent.* [*To Bibbins.*] What rent do you ask per month for that five-roomed house on Bell street that is to let?

*Bibbins.* Fifteen dollars per month.

*Gent.* I presume that you would desire me, in case I rented the house, to sign one of the tenants' association leases?

*Bibbins.* No, sir; you presume too much. If you rent the house you must sign one of our leases.

*Gent.* If you mean an iron-clad lease, I positively refuse to do so, sir?

*Bibbins.* Call it by that name if you wish to do so. That is what I mean. [*Exit Gent, U. E.*] Well, Smulls, if it don't beat everything! More than five and twenty persons have called here wanting to rent houses, during the past week, but all were unwilling to sign what is generally termed an iron-clad lease.

*Smulls.* Just as I said—the end is not yet come. It is too bad, sir.

*Enter A LADY, U. E.*

*Lady.* [*To Bibbins.*] I desire to rent one of those houses in Skipp's court.

*Bibbins.* You can do so, madam, provided you are willing to pay twelve dollars per month rent, in advance, and sign what is known as an iron-clad lease.

*Lady.* I will not agree to do anything of the kind. I am, sir, a member of the Anti-Iron-clad Lease and Protective Association. *Exit Lady, U. E.*

*Bibbins.* Well, well! I do not think that I have sold out my business any too soon.

*Smulls.* What! Sold out your business? You but jest, sir.

*Bibbins.* No, no; I am not jesting. It is the truth, and I think it was a very lucky move on my part.



*Smulls.* Who is the fortunate gentleman, sir?  
Ah! ah! ah!

*Bibbins.* His name is John W. Shay, a native of New York State, where the greater part of his life has been spent, and where he made considerable money in the real estate business. He arrived here in Philadelphia about a week ago, seeking investment, so he bought me out. Ah! ah! ah!

*Smulls.* When does Mr. Shay take possession?

*Bibbins.* To-morrow morning.

*Smulls.* [*To Tibbs.*] You will, of course, be compelled to seek employment elsewhere.

*Tibbs.* No, sir; I have been engaged by Mr. Shay, so will remain in this office.

*Smulls.* [*To Bibbins.*] You have certainly managed everything very nicely, so it seems. Do you intend to start into some other business, sir?

*Bibbins.* No, I do not, Smulls. What I intend to do is to travel. I have already made arrangements for a European trip. I expect to remain abroad for a few years, at least; possibly I shall never return. I have sufficient means to keep me in comfort the balance of my life.

*Smulls.* When do you expect to start, sir?—and in whose charge do you intend to leave your real estate? In Mr. Shay's?

*Bibbins.* I shall leave here for New York City to-morrow morning by the 4.30 train, and at 7.30 A. M. I will board the steamer British Prince (of the American line), which sails at the mentioned time for Liverpool, England. And as to my property, both real and personal have been sold—turned into cash money, as it were—which leaves me entirely free. And, being a bachelor, I am doubly free. Ah! ah! ah!

*Smulls.* I am very much astonished, sir; indeed I am. Have you informed your personal friends of your intention to go abroad?

*Bibbins.* Yes, and many of them have I invited to attend my farewell reception and banquet, which will take place at my residence this night. No money has been spared to make it a grand affair. I personally invite you, Smulls; will you come?

*Smulls.* Thank you, sir; I shall attend. Do you still own your residence? You told me that you had sold all of your real estate. I do not understand.

*Bibbins.* My residence, Smulls, along with all other properties that I owned, has been sold, as I told you, but the purchaser does not take possession until to-morrow, any time after sunrise.

*Smulls.* Oh, that is the way the affair has been managed.

*Bibbins.* [*Rises.*] I must now go. I wish you [*to Tibbs*] to look your best to-night.

*Tibbs.* I will, sir; thank you.

*Smulls.* [*Rises.*] I will go, too, as I have some business matters to attend to.

[*Exeunt Bibbins and Smulls, U. E.*]

*Tibbs.* [*Rises and stands at the desk arranging papers.*] I will go too, as there will be no business transacted in this office until to-morrow, when Mr. Shay takes possession of affairs. I intend to remain in Mr. Shay's employ until next Fall. Then I shall enter the law office of J. B. Townman, to read law. I have resolved to become a lawyer. Mr. Bibbins' gift of five hundred dollars to me, a few days ago, is a god-send to myself and mother, for we were at the time very poor. Oh, if my father were living our happiness would be complete.

[*Exit Tibbs, U. E.*]

SCENE II.—*A front view of Bibbins' grand residence, brilliantly lighted. A beautiful garden in front of the house.—The company assembled.—Music, dancing and feasting are going on within.*

*Enter FINN and QUINBY, via garden gate U. E.*

*Quinby.* [*Looking at the house.*] They are having a gay old time of it within.

*Finn.* Indeed they are. Well, we will not disturb them, but wait until the banquet is over before we pounce upon our man. He is not likely to do much traveling in the countries of Europe as he ardently expects to do, not at least for some years to come. So let him enjoy himself while he has the opportunity.

*Quinby.* I think you are right in not interfering with the feast by arresting Bibbins now. When the rascal is caged he will not have as good a time as he is now having. Ah! ah! ah!

*Enter ASSISTANT DETECTIVE SHAW and POLICE OFFICER BENNET, via garden gate, U. E.*

*Finn.* [*To Officer.*] You go to the rear of the house. Be vigilant; let not our man escape us. Should you hear the sound of a whistle come to the garden.

*Officer.* All right, sir.

[*Exit Officer (L. S.) of house.*]

*Finn.* Well, Shaw, have you anything new to report? If so, let me hear what it is at once.

*Shaw.* I have, sir. I have discovered that Gribbs, alias Bibbins, has purchased a through ticket for New York City, and intends to leave here for that city by the 4.30 A. M. train to-morrow morning. His baggage has already been checked. It will, however, now be detained until further orders shall have been received from you.

*Finn.* You have done well ; but come, we may as well sit down and await the gentleman's appearance.

[*They retire to (R. S.) of garden, where a bench is, and sit down. Quinby passes around segars, and they smoke.*]

*Shaw.* [*Looking at his watch.*] We will not have long to wait, as it is now a little past one o'clock.

[*A gentleman within the house is heard to say :  
"Come, fill your glasses full, and let us drink a farewell toast to our generous host. May God bless and protect him, and permit him to return to his native country and his many sincere friends, overflowing, as it were, with health and happiness."*]

*This is followed by applause and cries of "So say we all!"*

*Then the clinking of glasses is heard.*

*Bibbins replies: "I thank you most heartily for your good wishes, and may Heaven grant you all continuous health, happiness and prosperity. I part from you, my dear friends, with heartfelt regret, I do assure you."*

*All (within) "We believe you ! Long live our honorable host ! Huzza ! huzza ! huzza !"*

*Quinby.* They are preparing to depart. The banquet is about over, I judge.

*Finn.* [*To Quinby.*] I think it is. [*Rises.*]

*Shaw,* [*he rises*] you go to the side of the house and keep watch there. Should you hear a whistle, come immediately to the garden.

*Shaw.* All right, sir.

[*Exit Shaw (R. S.) of house.*]

[*Confusion within the house, caused by Bibbins and his friends preparing to take their departure. Loud laughter, etc.*]

*Finn.* Come. [*To Quinby, who rises.*] The feast is over. Bibbins will soon make his appearance. Let

us go close to the front wall of the house and wait his coming.

[*They go and stand close to the front of the house.*

[*Bibbins comes down the front steps with a portmanteau in his right hand, and a linen duster thrown over his left arm, followed by his guests. When he reaches the foot of the steps Tim Murray, a footman in livery, appears through the garden gateway, relieves him of those articles and exits via garden gate. As Bibbins steps toward the gate, Finn approaches him and places his hand upon his shoulder.*

*Finn.* Sir, you are my prisoner ; come with me.

*Bibbins.* [*Greatly surprised.*] No, sir ; I shall not. What means this intrusion ?

[*He endeavors to release himself. Finn blows a whistle. Enter Shaw and Officer Bennett.*

*Finn.* [*To Shaw and Bennett.*] Take charge of the prisoner. [*They take hold of him, one on each side.*

*Bibbins.* Upon what charge ? Oh, this is an outrage ! There is some mistake.

*Finn.* Forgery, sir.

*Bibbins.* Preposterous ! When ? Where committed ?

*Finn.* Nearly thirteen years ago one David Gribbs, alias Bibbins, forged the name of, J. C. Cathmore, a wealthy retired merchant, then a resident of Boston, Massachusetts, to a check for ten thousand dollars, upon the West-End Savings Bank, located in the same city. The check was, on presentation, honored, and the forger immediately fled to parts unknown—until recently—and you are the man that is wanted. Here is the warrant for your arrest. Shall I read it to you ?

*Bibbins.* No need to do so ; I am willing to go with you, knowing, as I do, that I can easily prove my innocence. But what proof have you that I am David Gribbs ?



*Finn.* [*Hands Bibbins a paper.*] Your own written confession, sir ; read it.

*Bibbins.* [*Takes the paper and reads it to himself with great agitation.*] Oh ! heavens where did you get this paper ?

*Finn.* [*Takes the paper from him.*] From the man whom you recently sold your waste office papers to.

*Tibbs.* [*Shakes hands with Bibbins.*] I sympathize with you, sir. Indeed I do. I do hope there is some mistake.

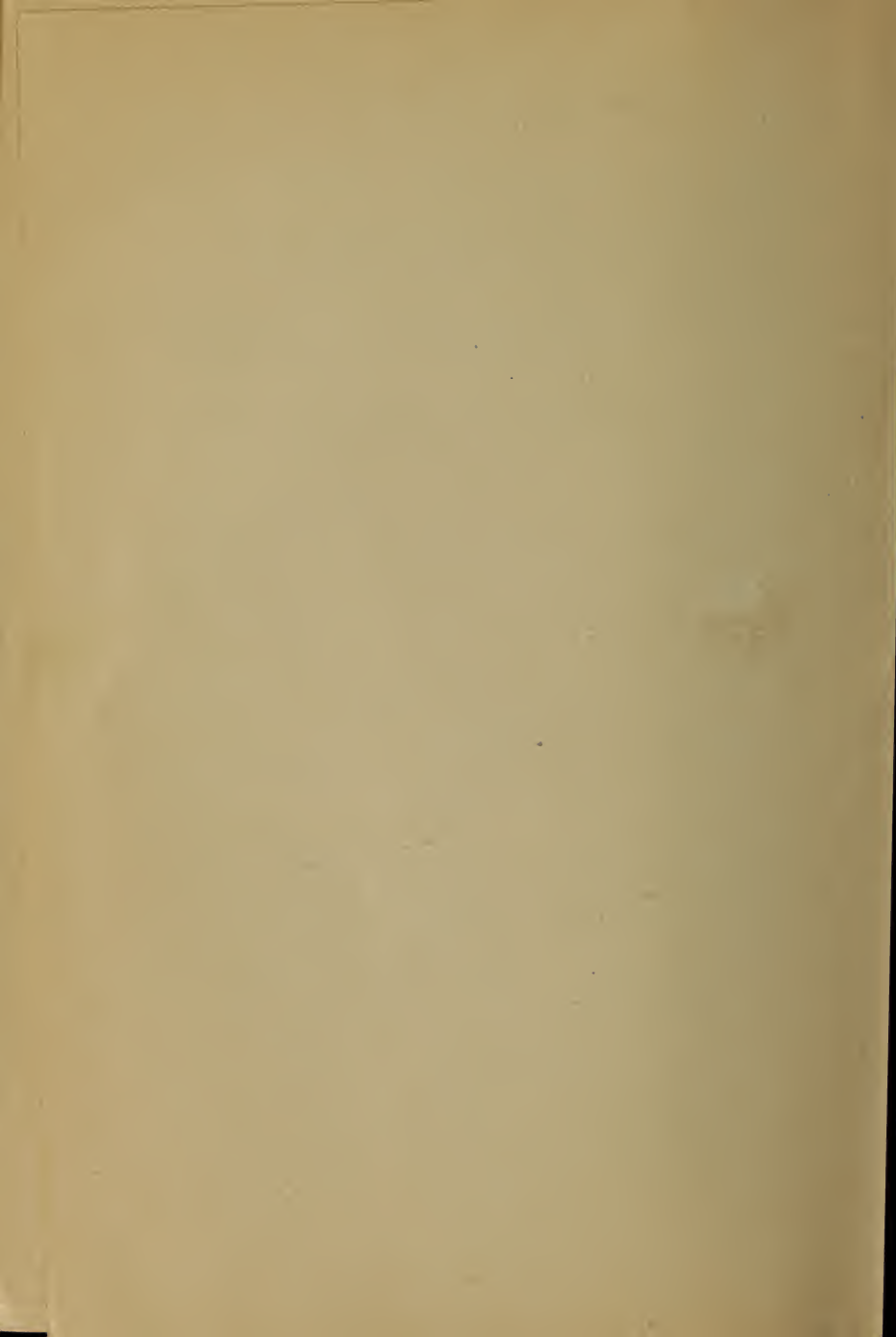
*Bibbins.* [*Sadly.*] I thank you Tibbs, for your heartfelt sympathy. But there is no mistake. I am in a sad plight. Oh ! what a fool I was for not having destroyed that paper—my confession of the crime of forgery. But alas ! who can control his fate ?

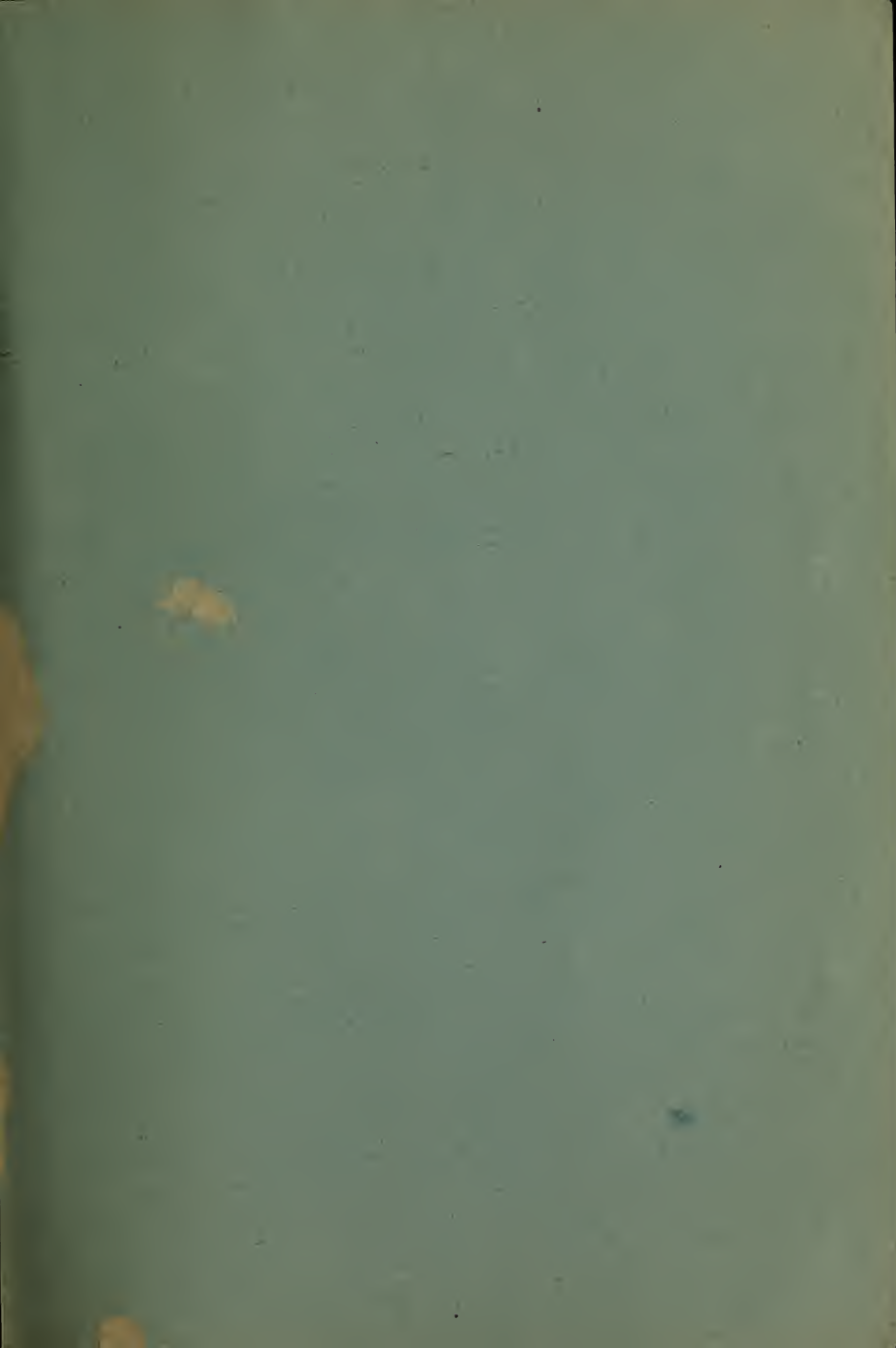
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DISPOSITION OF CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF  
THE CURTAIN.

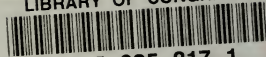
R. S.	C.	L. S.
<i>Finn</i>	<i>Smulls,</i>	<i>Tibbs, Shaw</i>
<i>(detective)</i>	<i>Guests</i>	<i>and Officer Bennett,</i>
<i>and</i>	<i>and others.</i>	<i>with their prisoner,</i>
<i>Quinby.</i>		<i>David Gribbs,</i>
		<i>alias Bibbins, the forger.</i>
<i>The Curtain Drops.</i>		

THE END.





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